

the rise in energy costs with policies that discourage exploration of domestic resources and attempt to bypass Congress to implement cap-and-trade. A major way to improve reliability and affordability is to produce more energy here at home.

I am pleased to join my colleagues as we debate energy solutions and advance an all-of-the-above energy policy to power economic growth and job creation.

CELEBRATING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, this month, as we celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month, we reflect upon unique backgrounds and honor our collective history, but the reality is that our current immigration system is badly broken.

Immigration reform is not only the right thing to do morally, it is the right thing to do for our economy. Businesses in Connecticut and across the Nation are demanding that we have immigration reform, so that they can hire employees and expand their businesses.

I have heard from manufacturers and from biotech companies in my own district who are eager to hire new engineers and Ph.D.'s, but our current system forces most of the best and brightest who come from around the world, who train at our research institutions here in the United States, trained at taxpayer expense, we force them to leave this country, taking their talents with them.

I have met with dairy farmers in Connecticut who cannot find enough laborers to work on their farms. Farmers are demanding that Congress reform our immigration system to provide a reliable and stable workforce, so that they can continue to provide local food, milk, and cheese for our families.

There are 11 million immigrants who are ready to emerge from the shadows, ready to join the workforce, and to grow our economy: people like Maria, a mother of three from Meriden, who brought her family here to build a better life; people like Camila and Carolina—twin sisters, honor students—from Danbury, who cofounded Connecticut Students for a DREAM, to help DREAMers navigate the immigration system.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to act. Let's honor our Nation of immigrants by passing comprehensive immigration reform that secures our borders, keeps our families together, and creates an earned path to citizenship.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last week, I voted against the Defense Appropria-

tions bill because of \$79.4 billion included it included in OCO funding.

During the amendment process, I joined many of my colleagues in both parties in voting to stop funding the war in Afghanistan after 2014.

Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in this effort, and I am on the floor of the House today because the American people are frustrated with the administration and with Congress for continuing to spend taxpayer money overseas in unnecessary military interventions. I share this frustration with the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the House an article in the Daily Journal Online titled "No End for Afghanistan's War on the United States Taxpayer"—"No End for Afghanistan's War on the United States Taxpayer," which states:

John F. Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, known as SIGAR, may have taken Uncle Sam and shaken him by the lapels last month, but the media missed it. Americans, however, need to hear how Sopko, in an address at the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C., laid out why Afghanistan remains "relevant"—and a cause for outrage—for every U.S. taxpayer and policymaker. In short, Afghanistan is on life support, and Joe Citizen is its permanent IV.

These are the words of John Sopko. This article goes on to say:

SIGAR, on the job since 2008, has produced 118 audits and inspection reports and made 23 quarterly reports to Congress. Nothing seems to penetrate the Capitol dome, however.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to a quote by Pat Buchanan, with whom I agree strongly on foreign policy issues:

Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world, so we can defend the world?

How appropriate a statement is that? We are a debtor nation that has to borrow money every year to pay the debts of our own Nation, and we borrow money to spend overseas in foreign areas. It makes no sense.

That is why I am so disappointed that, last week, we were unable to put a stop on the waste, fraud, and abuse of the American taxpayer money in Afghanistan.

Now, when we also must consider the collapse of Iraq, I am reminded of a quote from our country's first President, in a letter from George Washington to James Monroe, and I quote Washington:

I have always given it as my decided opinion that no nation has a right to intermeddle in the concerns of another, that everybody has a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves.

Mr. Speaker, beside me is a poster of military carrying the casket of an American soldier killed in either Iraq or Afghanistan. I bring this to the floor because, this past weekend, we had three marines from Camp Lejeune—which is in the district I represent, the Third District of North Carolina—three marines in the engineering battalion in

Afghanistan helping to build roads in Afghanistan. The three were shot and killed.

That is why I continue to join my colleagues, and both parties come to this floor and to say to the Congress: you are not listening to the American people, the American people are sick and tired of their sons and daughters dying in foreign lands, borrowing money from the Chinese to pay for that development in those foreign lands, and we continue to have more and more losing their life and their limbs.

It is time for the Congress to listen to the American people. They are the ones that elect us to come here to represent their views and their interests, and we are not listening to them as it relates to Afghanistan.

I pray for our men and women in uniform, their families, and pray for the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 150th anniversary of the Yosemite Grant Act that was signed into law in 1864 by then-President Abraham Lincoln and the creation of Yosemite National Park, one of our Nation's greatest treasures.

Yosemite receives over 4 million visitors annually, all who come to experience our breathtaking scenery and wonderment that the park provides for all Americans.

As a Californian and a longtime park supporter since my early childhood, I understand the importance of safeguarding our precious national resources.

Yosemite is an integral part of our communities and our country, and it is also a great source of pride for all Californians. Therefore, we must work together, despite the challenges that we face, to not only preserve Yosemite National Park for future generations to come, but for all of America's great natural resources.

Yosemite is just one of many of the crown jewels of America's national park system. Its beautiful and majestic park is, obviously, something to behold and where visitors come every year from not only across America, but from throughout the world.

For all Americans, we must remember that Yosemite National Park represents among the best of America. As it has been said before: America's national parks, perhaps America's best idea.

Therefore, it is my honor to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Yosemite National Park, the first park designated in our country.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGOS) for 5 minutes.